

After defending it for half a day, the garrison was frightened into surrender, and the governor, Sir John Newton, became a hostage in the hands of the insurgents. It was an important success, not so much strategically as morally. It showed that panic had seized the authorities, and that the half-armed mob was for the present irresistible. Rochester Castle fell like the Bastille at the shout of the people, and the news of its fall gave confidence to rebellion and caused the hands of the governors to tremble.¹

On the 10th a body of revolutionists entered Canterbury and were heartily welcomed by the inhabitants, who had previously shut out the collectors. The mob broke into the Cathedral during Mass, and interrupted the singing of the monks by calling on them to elect a new Archbishop, for Sud-bury, they cried, was a traitor and would soon die a traitor's death. They rushed back into the streets and forced the Mayor and bailiffs to take an oath of fealty to 'King Richard and the Commons.' The bulk of the rebels then hastened off to London, the centre on which all bodies were now converging, though they took care to leave a guard in the capital of Kent. For the next month it was the stronghold of the rebellion. The Mayor and bailiffs were so far faithful to their strange oath that they continued in office under the altered conditions; the old authorities presided during the whole period of mob-rule, until three weeks later, when the justices at last came down from London to restore order. During this reign of terror in Canterbury, old grudges were paid off by the citizens on unpopular characters. Many houses were sacked, many burglaries took place, but there were not more than two or three murders.² A similar state of anarchy and private feud, but not of total ruin and indiscriminate massacre, seems to have prevailed in many of the larger English towns during the *hurling times,* as they were called.³ It is often hard to distinguish, in the records of the trials, between the act of the mob incensed against a supposed oppressor of the poor, and the work of a few scoundrels hired by a private person to finish off an old quarrel under cover of the general disorder.

¹ H. -B., 511-2. ² *Kent Arch.*, iii. 73 *et seq.*; *H. J2.*, 51S. ³ See Ap.; hurling = shouting.